

Eminent Authority Gives Explanation of Beauty---Proper Proportions of Bodily Parts Defined---Features Discussed

BY JOHN ELPRETH WATKINS.
Washington, D. C., January 20, 1910.
Beauty of the human form, divine has been the life study of Major Robert W. Shufeldt, Medical Corps, United States Army, biologist and author, who needs no introduction to the reader who is an artist or savant. My toes would turn no other way but towards him after I had taken a chance glimpse at a new work, "Studies of the Human Form," bearing his name upon the title page and some 500 wonderful and daring products of his camera between its broad covers. Having disentangled myself from the labyrinthine mazes of Mount Pleasant, I found him a jolly and hospitable host, with his head adorned by a red fez and his mouth by a stogy as crooked as Harry Lauder's cane, and almost as long. And what beauty it was that gazed down upon us here, there and everywhere, beauty, created not by the brush and chisel of man, but the Maker Himself and reflected by the crystal eye of the camera.

"Who is the greatest American beauty of to-day?" was my first shot. But the doctor dodged.

"No, sir, I will not play the role of Mount Pleasant. I might award the apple to-day and then wish I had it back to give to some new beauty met with even before your story got into type. And, besides, my Venus would, I am sure, be some one unheard of--no great actress, no grande dame of society or that sort."

After he had thus parried a dozen or more of pointed interrogations I finally hurled one that came nearer the mark.

Perfect Female Proportions.

"What are the perfect proportions for a woman?"

"As there are no two women in the world exactly alike in features or proportions, there can be no natural standard, and any law we please to fix must be elastic. Great artists and anatomists vary in the 'canon' of proportion they have set up as a basis for the normal female proportions. But there are a few laws on which most of them agree."

"The perfectly proportioned woman should be seven and a half times the height of her head, ten times the height of her face, nine times the length of her hand and arm six to seven times the length of her foot. The distance between her temples should be equal to the length of her face. Her arms should be three times and her legs four times the length of her head. Her shoulders should be two heads wide, and the upper and lower parts of her arm and of her leg should be of equal length."

Oval Face the Most Beautiful.

"Now, as to the perfect face, doctor--analyze it for me."

"First let me say that mankind wears not the face to-day that it wore years ago, nor will it in the far future wear the same face that now characterizes the family as a whole. The form of the face is an index to intellectual ability and strength of character. Those with circular faces stand lowest in the scale in these respects, while oval or suboval faced women are, everything else being equal, the higher types intellectually. Thus the circular face predominates among the black and red races, and is met with in some of the Oriental stocks, while the oval face prevails among the higher Indo-Europeans."

Eyes Most Important.

"Now let us take up the features in their order. In indicating the emotions agitating the mind the eyes play a more important part than the other features. The expression of the eyes depends largely upon their external

appendages. Thus during extreme anger or severity the eyebrows contract, while the eyelids stiffen and are somewhat drawn to. But to give beauty to the eyes the eye sockets should be large and deep rather than small, and the beautiful eyebrow is one, not too prominent, in which the hair makes a perfect and graceful arch, growing to a point as it passes outward. Heavy eyebrows are sometimes consistent with brunettes but never with blond types of beauty, while those which merge over the nose give a masculine effect. As means of imparting expression the eyebrows may be completely under control of the will, and those skilled in their control may employ them to simulate various passions and emotions.

Hair Rank Second.

"Next to the charm, the loveliness, the fascination of woman's eyes is the glory, the splendor that every lover of the sex sees in a full and lustrous hair. A luxuriance of black hair devoid of all unnatural adornment is certainly one of the glories of nature. But when it is of a deep Tintian red, with warm reflections of golden hue, and is abundant, long soft, wavy and fine, then indeed have we something worthy of the gaze of the gods. Poets and lovers may be forgiven for anything they may say in praise of it."

"The nose enters into many of the more powerful expressions of the face when agitated by a number of mental emotions. Moreover, its form expresses strength or weakness of will, good or bad temper. Beauty demands that this feature should be slender and straight. Among the dark-skinned barbaric races well molded noses are rare."

The Mouth More Interesting.

"And the mouth, doctor, do not overlook that."

"By no means, for it offers a far wider field of study than does the nose. Indeed, the lips easily take rank among the most charming features of a beautiful face, when they are prettily proportioned; while, on the other hand, when thin, pallid, straight and considerably produced from side to side, they are not glorious to look upon. The contour lines of the lips not only suggest character, but are constantly changing with age. Full lips are more to be admired in dark-skinned beauties than in the blonde types. But beauty of the mouth depends to a large degree upon the teeth, also, especially the regularity and whiteness of the four incisors in either jaw, which are the teeth most frequently seen, and then the four canines, the two above and two below which are next most conspicuous. But in ordinary open smiles it is the upper teeth alone which are visible. Yet those teeth which are not ordinarily seen alter the expression of the face. Thus, when back teeth are missing, the cheeks collapse and as the teeth wear out, with age, the lips become compressed, while the nose approaches the chin, the mouth widens and the skin forms larger folds round the corners of the mouth. I can frequently tell from a woman's face before I have seen her teeth whether they are sound or not."

The Devil in Her Ear.

"Ears, although incapable of entering into impression of emotion, are yet quite as indicative of character as the eye, mouth or nose. If a woman has a long, narrow and thin ear, so suggestive of the satanic auricle, there is the devil lurking somewhere. No organ is superior to the ear to establish the identity of an individual, for its form is practically unchanging throughout life, and the ears of two



Glorious Hair



An Oval Face.



Perfect Arm and Torso.



DR. R. W. SHUFELDT.



Gorgeous Eyes.

largely upon physical training in girlhood, aimed at development of the muscles of the back, breast and shoulders.

Few With a Good Torso.

"Few women of our race are now found with a torso (trunk) which would meet the requirements of any art standard. One of the few that I have found is a young Swede, and this endowment has made her a favorite model among New York painters and sculptors. It is her boast that she never in her life wore a corset."

"Yes, but I am satisfied that the harm done by the corset to the female torso depends upon the kind of corset worn, and whether her bones are strong or frail and a few minor points."

"The torso can be wonderfully beautiful in a great variety of types of women, and in so far as my established standards are concerned, we are just as likely to find them in old as in young women. In small as in large women, this is not due to excess, but to heredity, and there are many women who can engage in gymnastics for an hour daily and produce a fine general muscular development with increased rotundity of form and elasticity of movement instead of hard and prominent muscles."

However well developed, a woman's forearm should never have its muscles thrown into prominence, while a man's may become, and with advantage, as big as Sandow's. One of the most beautiful comparisons known to me of the male and female arm is to be seen in David's painting of Paris and Helen in the Louvre. If I meet with a woman in whom the muscles become more or less evident when the arm is powerfully flexed, I frequently know it to be an indication of the vindictive virago and the same woman is apt to have a round, hard, bossy chin and a stolid stare."

The Educated Hand.

"The arm and hand rank next to the head as instrument of emotional expression. Their every trifling gesture



The "Corset Torso."

has its meaning, and is an index to the mind to which they are servant. And as age advances they seem to take on a very part of the character of the possessor. Unrefinement, culture, meanness, music, power, vacillation, charity, dexterity, crime and worthlessness are each and all distinctly expressed in the hands, and when the entire arm is seen all the character of the person is in the first as made naturally by man and woman. The man does not draw the end of his thumb so far into the palm, but more decidedly overlaps the points of the index and middle fingers. One of the great beauties of the hand in this other picture is the prominence on each of the little eminences inside the finger tips. The perfect hand is one-fifth the length of the body and tapers gradually to well curved nails, which should be longer than they are broad. A line drawn from the top of the bone of the upper arm should reach the end of the first finger when the arm is turned with the palm backward, and the same length of line should extend to the end of the third finger when the arm is turned with the palm outward."

The perfect foot is more rare among civilized women than the perfect hand. And how shall we know it when, by chance, we see it? The second toe extends beyond the great toe and is the largest, while the third toe is about as long as the big one. And when set upon the ground the instep should be so high that a little bird could sit under it."

Disagree Most as to Perfect Leg.

"And define the perfect leg?"

"That is difficult, for artists' stand-

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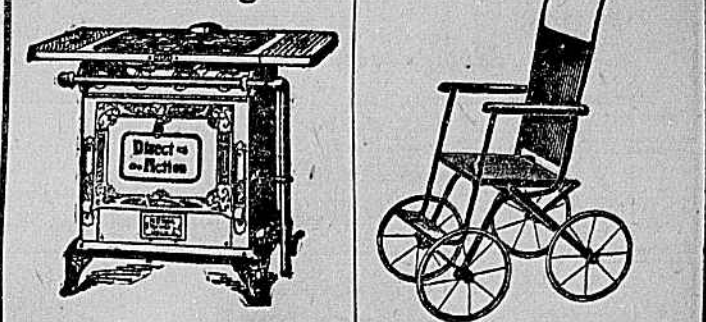
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ards of proportion differ most with respect to the lower extremities. Some say that feminine legs should touch in four places when brought normally together without great muscular exertion, while others require that they touch at but two points.

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"And you include poverty?"

"Yes, indeed. Poverty is beauty's greatest material enemy."

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